

PRINT



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Narrative Illustration

THE STORY OF THE COMICS

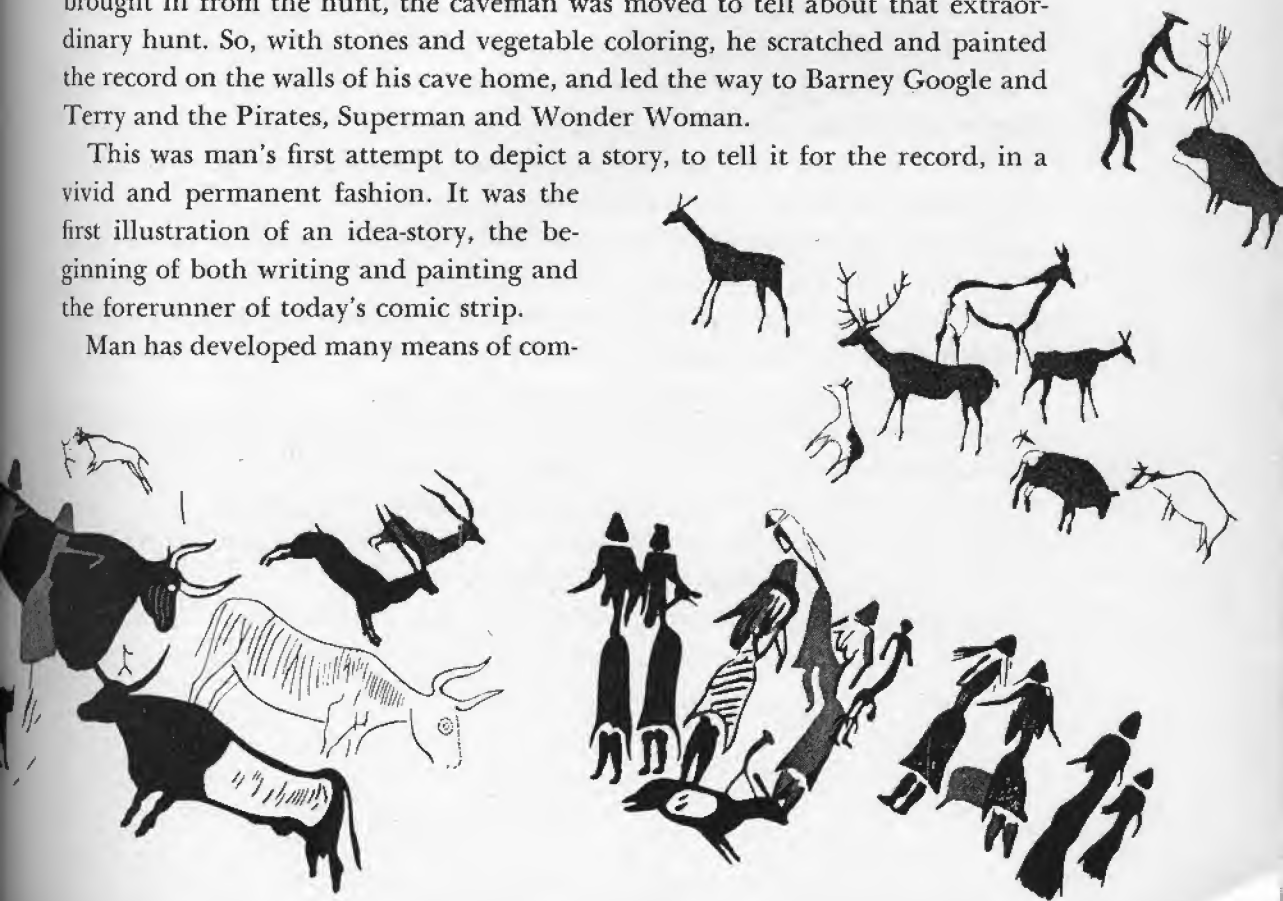
M. C. GAINES

IT SEEMS that Little Orphan Annie isn't an orphan after all. Her ancestors include Sumerian army men whose exploits are celebrated in tablets long buried under desert sands, and Nile women of far-off centuries whose daily lives are enshrined in ancient picture tale.

When man climbed down from trees, straightened his back and looked around at the world, he started getting ideas. For a time, he was able to convey these ideas with a few grunts and a stone ax. But, though this method of enforcing ideas still persists, its limitations were early recognized. A refinement of ideas needed a refinement of expression. And while still sitting around a fire on his haunches and gnawing at the under-done leg of the animal he had just brought in from the hunt, the caveman was moved to tell about that extraordinary hunt. So, with stones and vegetable coloring, he scratched and painted the record on the walls of his cave home, and led the way to Barney Google and Terry and the Pirates, Superman and Wonder Woman.

This was man's first attempt to depict a story, to tell it for the record, in a vivid and permanent fashion. It was the first illustration of an idea-story, the beginning of both writing and painting and the forerunner of today's comic strip.

Man has developed many means of com-





Ancient Egyptian
daily life

munication: writing and printing, dancing, music, radio, motion pictures. But down through the ages, he has continued to use the picture-story as one of the most eloquent mediums of expression. It is a natural form, for man thinks in images, just as the child draws a story before he can write.

The chieftains and kings used narrative art to make their honorable records endure. To give a permanence to life after death, the ancients inscribed everyday scenes in pictures on the walls of their tombs. The ease with which the idea could be conveyed through the picture-story has been discovered and rediscovered at each step of human progress. When it was unknown or forgotten by a race or nation, it reappeared as a natural and inevitable invention in the development of civilization. It was used to record religious rituals, historical events, and sacred myths. It was employed for propaganda, vanity, or just for the sake of laughter. The simple, direct drawing also lent itself to satire and caricature and became an important political weapon.

Raphael made cartoons, large preparatory sketches, to assist him in painting his frescoes. The word *cartoon* comes from the French *carton* and the Italian *cartone*, from the Latin *charta*, meaning paper. The word *caricature* means to charge, to overload, or to exaggerate, and the invention of mock-portraiture is attributed to Annibale Carracci (1560–1609), who was a master of classical painting and founder of an academy.

Thus evolved a group of artists who, through line sketches, were quickly able to convey an idea and tell a story. When political pressure became heavy and the prison awaited the man who wrote what he thought of a ruler, these facile artists found they could easily overload a line drawing with the character of the subject. Not a word was said, but a story was told.

This story has been documented in an exhibition by the American Institute of Graphic Arts, now touring the country. Assembled under the direction of Miss Jessie Gillespie Willing, Program Chairman of the Institute, the exhibition sets forth for the first time a history of narrative art from the first recorded picture-story to the comic book of the twentieth century.

Earliest sample of comic strip lineage to be seen in the Institute's exhibition is a drawing copied from a rock shelter in Cogul, Spain (see preceding page).

This graphic representation was made before the beginnings of recorded history. Similar wall scratchings have been found by anthropologists in other parts of western Europe and in Africa. Gerald McDonald of The New York Public Library, advisory board member in charge of the ancient section of the exhibit, says, "In this panel showing a buffalo hunt and people celebrating, I believe the artist probably wanted to say: 'Here we are on a hunt. Here are the big animals we killed. And here is the big dance we had in celebration.' The pictures are not unlike a page from a snapshot album where the proud fisherman is photographed with his catch."

It is curious to note the similarity between the prehistoric paintings and the paintings of the American Indians done in comparatively recent times, such as that of the life of the famous Sioux Indian, Sitting Bull, drawn on muslin and now preserved in The New York Public Library.

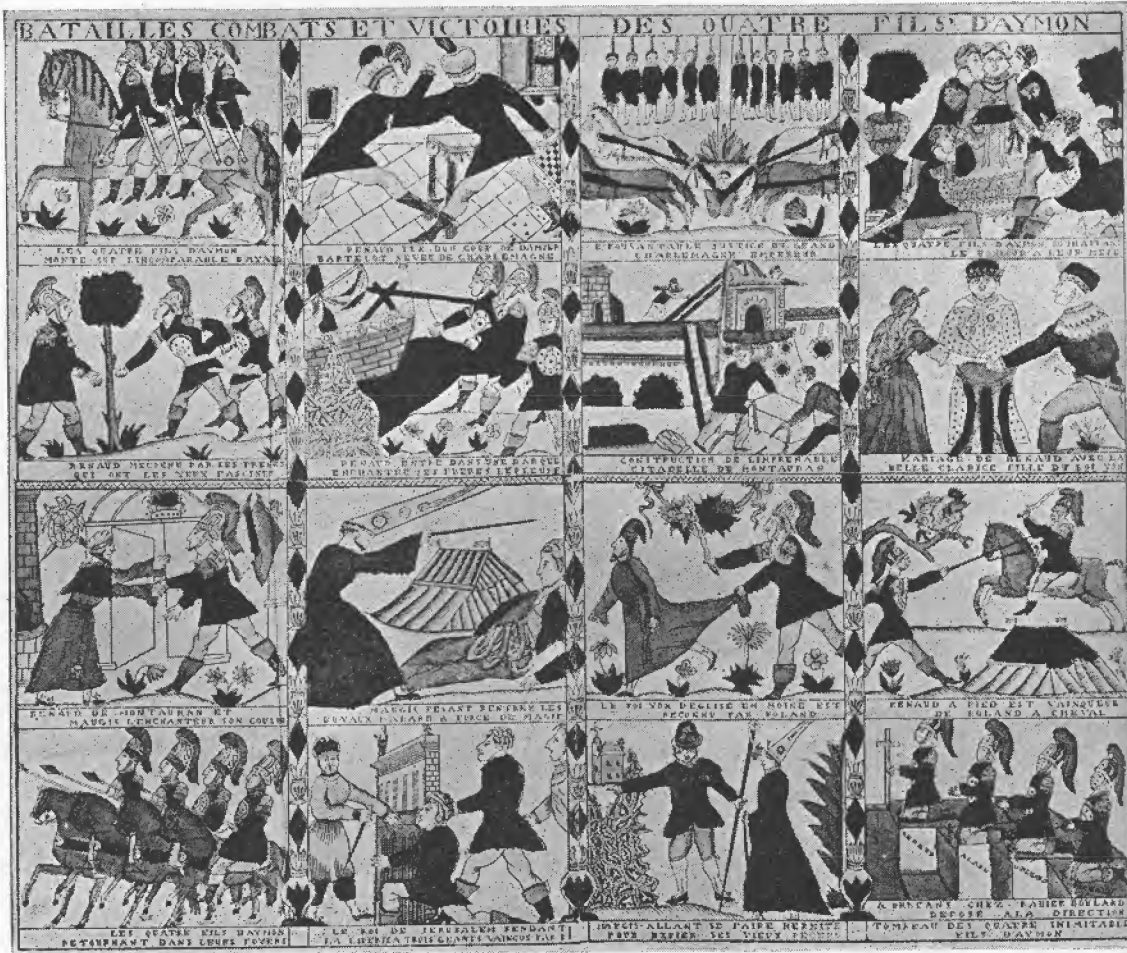
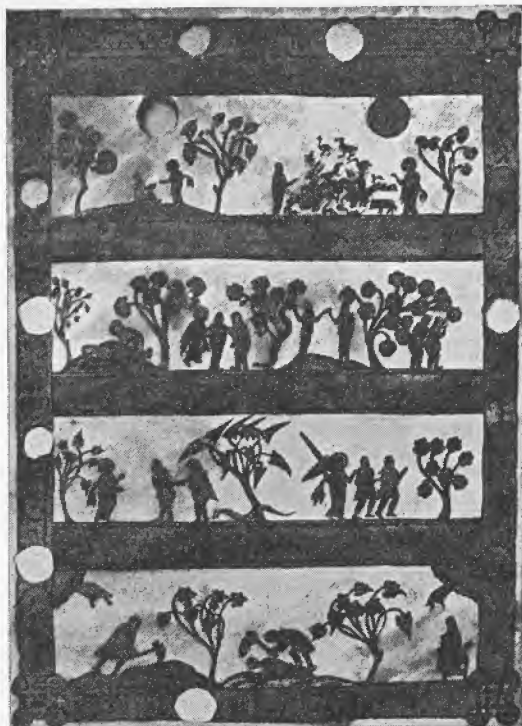
Early mosaics in shells, lapis lazuli, and pink limestone, from Ur, dated 3500 B.C., tell the story of the Sumerian army at war, and show the royal family at feast. Scenes from daily life in ancient Egypt, taken from the tomb of Menna, show two girls engaged in a hair-pulling contest as another girl removes a thorn from her foot. Most of the art of ancient civilizations pictures the heroic or the sacred, but in Egyptian tombs there can be found records of more commonplace events, and scenes which are essentially comic.

In a ninth-century Carolingian manuscript, known as the Bamberg Bible, nature is an actor in the picture-story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The tree shelters and comforts Adam and Eve at first, then in a later scene points an accusing finger-branch, much as Disney's trees in the Snow White forest scene, or Art Young's gnarled and knotted arboreal fantasies.

An early use of animals to satirize humans is found in the Japanese Kôzanji scrolls by Toba Sôjô (1053-1140), which show hares and frogs in humorous archery tournaments. In other sequences of the scroll they are shown in aquatic sports and wrestling matches, while a monkey in the garb of a priest officiates at a Buddhist ceremony.

Kôzanji scroll





The Bamberg Bible picture-story of Adam and Eve in the Garden (upper left). *Apocalypsis Sancti Johannis*, c. 1470 (upper right). Below, French story, "Quatre Fils d'Aymon," from "Image Populaire," printed at Orleans in the eighteenth century

In western Europe religious stories were mainly the early subjects, as exemplified by the Joshua Scroll of the tenth century. A picture-scroll, illustrating the story of the book of Joshua, it is presumably a copy of a scroll originally made many centuries earlier.

With the initial developments of printing appeared the fifteenth-century blockbooks. Among those bearing a remarkable resemblance to the modern comic book are the *Biblia Pauperum*, a sort of harmony of the gospels done in pictorial form, *Apocalypsis Sancti Johannis*, *Das Buch von dem Entkrüst*, and *Defensorium Immaculatae Virginitatis*. The blockbooks tried to tell their stories without words, and when words were used, it was with a scroll-like balloon. They mark an early attempt to reach a popular audience, as prior to their appearance books had been directed almost entirely to scholars and church dignitaries.

Martin Luther used the picture form to popularize his religious ideas. In 1521 he published his *Passional Christi und Antichristi*, showing the humility of Christ in contrast to the pomp and pride of the churchmen. Hans Cranach was the artist and the idea behind his work stems, it would seem, from one of the fifteenth-century blockbooks, *Das Buch von dem Entkrüst*.

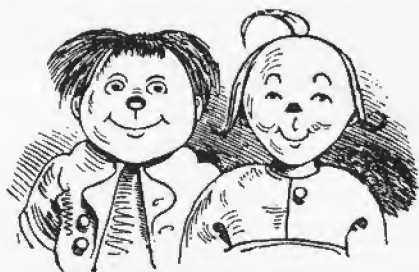
Hieronymous Bosch, Peter Bruegel the Elder, and the illustrator of Brandt's *Ship of Fools* were noted in this period for the striking power of their satire. Hans Holbein the Younger, too, was interested in both comic art and the idea of picture sequences as is shown by his marginal drawings for Erasmus' *Encomium Moriae*, 1515, and his illustrations of the Dance of Death in *Imagines Mortis*.

With the introduction of new methods of printing, engraving, and the like, opportunities for wider circulation arrived. William Hogarth's (1697-1764) stinging social comment in such works as *The Rake's Progress* gave caricature a new impulse.

The great caricaturists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were skilled in the use of the sequence of panels, just as in the modern comic strip. James Gillray (1757-1815), master of political broadsides, satirized the country squire in his hunting series. Others of this rich period were Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827) who used enclosed balloons, and the great George Cruikshank (1792-1878) who sharpened his pen on prince, court, and people.

In France and in Germany, as well as in England, the artists were turning out picture-tales for the people. Among them were Honoré Daumier (1808-1879) with his cartoons, *The Labors of Hercules* by Gustave Doré, published

in Paris in 1847 when Doré was fifteen, and *Les Amours de M. Vieux Bois*, by Rodolphe Toepffer, 1860. The incomparable drawings of Wilhelm Busch, master of line drawing, are found in his *Sketch Book*, as well as in his famous book about the two naughty boys, *Max und Moritz*.



Max und Moritz

Besides the picture books and the varied influences which have been mentioned, three other forces were at work in the nineteenth century which were to set the pattern of the comic strip before it finally emerged as a feature of the modern American newspaper. One was the popular penny sheet, known in France as the "image populaire" and in Germany as Bilderbogen. In them and in the comic sequences of European and American periodicals the basic features of the comic strip were so fully developed that the newspaper comic strip was full grown at the time of its birth. It was only necessary to adapt it to newspaper printing equipment and to discover the preferences of newspaper readers. The third force may have been less tangible. But the magic-lantern slide, with its series of pictures which were often humorous, stirred the imagination of the comic artist just as it did the men involved at the end of the nineteenth century in experiments with another closely related art, that of the motion picture.

The 1890's saw the development of the first comic cartoons in sequence in American newspapers. In 1894, R. F. Outcault, a staff artist on the *New York World*, did a series on a clown and a dog at a picnic. The *World* had obtained a color printing press, with the original intention of using it for fashion pictures. Outcault was asked to do a weekly page using the characters he had drawn to illustrate a story called "McFadden's Row of Flats" by E. W. Townsend. Taking these tough kid characters, he wove them into a weekly picture-story, first called "Hogan's Alley," then "The Kid." Later, when Outcault went to the *Journal*, the colorist painted the "Kid's" shirt yellow, and the strip came to be known as "The Yellow Kid." There were many protests from par-

NARRATIVE ILLUSTRATION

ents who thought the "Kid" too vulgar, and to mollify them, Outcault lengthened the shirt-like garment the "Kid" wore.

Immediately after Outcault's first sally into comic continuity, a number of other strips were started. Artists of the day included Frederick Burr Opper of Happy Hooligan fame, and T. S. Sullivant, whose animal pictures, with their lugubrious and expressive faces, were masterpieces of drawing. The story is told of the painstaking care with which Sullivant drew. When given an assignment to do a donkey sitting in a chair, he worked for hours and hours. Finally, complaining bitterly, he unburdened himself to Opper, who laughed away his problem, picked up a pencil, and swiftly drew the comical donkey, over Sullivant's protests that no animal could assume such a position. Opper was one of the most prolific of the early artists.

In 1897, Rudolph Dirks was asked to build up a series of stories along the lines of Wilhelm Busch's *Max und Moritz*. He called it the "Katzenjammer Kids." Mr. Dirks still draws this strip under the title of "The Captain and the Kids" for United Features Syndicate, for when he left the *Journal* in 1914 to go to the *World*, he found he could not take the title with him. H. H. Knerr was hired to continue the "Katzenjammer Kids," which he does to this day for King Features Syndicate.

The color printing of the first comics was often comical in its results. For some time, the register of the colors was rather weird. The first artists furnished



Winsor McCay's *Little Nemo* and F. B. Opper's *Happy Hooligan*, long-time favorites with comics fans.

a black line drawing, from which a wet plate negative was made. From this, four prints were made on zinc plates, one of which was etched for the black key plate. The artist then colored his black sketch, and from this the platemaker laid in by hand the red, yellow, and blue on the other three plates, using Ben Day films to get the desired color effects. This system was finally perfected and is used today on all comic products printed from relief plates. The Ben Day process was used exclusively on color plates up to about 1923, when experiments proved that four-color process plates could also be printed successfully on rotary four-color newsprint presses.

Not only in New York, but in Chicago and San Francisco, artists were called upon to create new characters for comic pages. James Swinnerton, a fine stylist and the creator of "Mr. Jack" and "Little Jimmy," says in an interview reported in *Editor & Publisher*, July, 1934: "Some forty years ago, we artists of the newspapers were a badly driven lot. The 'zincograph' cuts had just replaced the old chalk plate, and in the change, there was a rush to do great stuff with the new process which gave more latitude and speed in reproduction of pen and ink drawings.

"The artist of that date had to go to all sorts of happenings that are now covered by the staff photographers, as photographs were not yet produced successfully on news pages. A typical day was spent covering, say, a flower show or trial in the morning, a baseball game in the afternoon, with, maybe, an art opening, and a murder or two at night.

"One had to be able to draw anything at a moment's notice. Those of us who had a comic turn in our work would try to crowd a comic drawing in whenever we could, and, so doing, our editor began to find out that a good cartoon, or comic drawing, drew more notice from the readers; and in that way, the comic drawing in the newspaper world gradually came into its own.

"In those days, we swore by Zimmerman and Oppen and others of the grotesque school who illustrated printed jokes. It was not the fashion to have balloons showing what the characters were saying, as that was supposed to have been buried with the English Cruikshank, but along came the comic supplements, and with Dick Outcault's 'Yellow Kid,' the balloons came back and literally filled the comic sky.

"They have stayed with us ever since. The style of our comic subjects which appeal to the public has changed at least three times in forty years. The old grotesque stuff would not be successful now, and the family happening, so popular today, would have been considered tame and silly then."

THE MINUTE MAN ANSWERS THE CALL

by M.C. GAINES

WE'LL MAKE THIS SHOT
HEARD ROUND
THE WORLD.

FROM
EARLIEST PIONEER DAYS,
THE AMERICAN CITIZEN
WAS READY TO DEFEND HIS
COUNTRY AND HIS RIGHTS
AT A MINUTE'S NOTICE. HE
FOLLOWED THE PLOUGH
WITH RIFLE SLUNG
ACROSS HIS BACK!

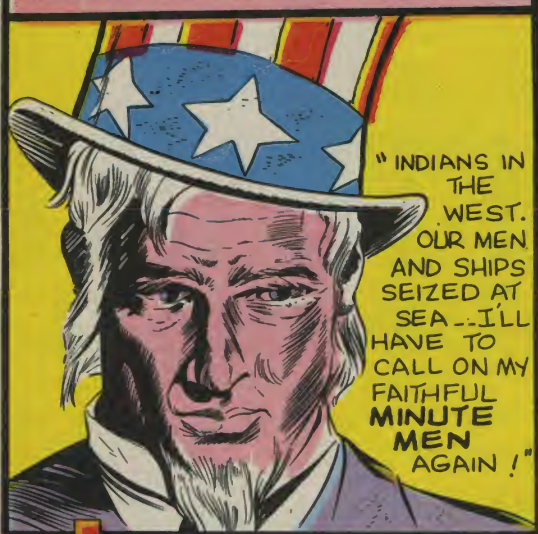
WE'RE FIGHTING FOR
THE RIGHT TO TAX
OURSELVES, AND LIVE
OUR OWN LIVES!

1775
LEXINGTON AND
CONCORD... THE
REVOLUTION BEGAN!

... THEN IN 1781...
CORNWALLIS SURRENDERED
TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

SO ENDED TAXATION WITHOUT
REPRESENTATION AND THE WORLD'S
FIRST GREAT DEMOCRACY WAS BORN!

TROUBLES BESET THE YOUNG DEMOCRACY!



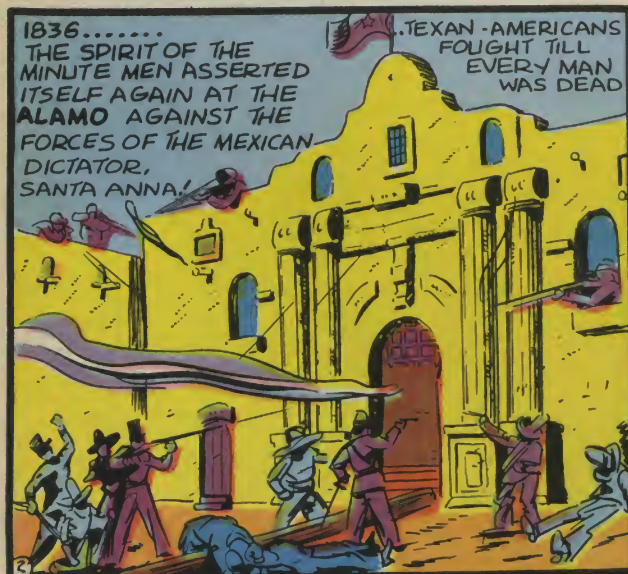
"INDIANS IN THE WEST. OUR MEN AND SHIPS SEIZED AT SEA... I'LL HAVE TO CALL ON MY FAITHFUL MINUTE MEN AGAIN!"



MY FATHER WAS A MINUTE MAN IN 1775... I'LL ANSWER THE CALL THIS TIME..

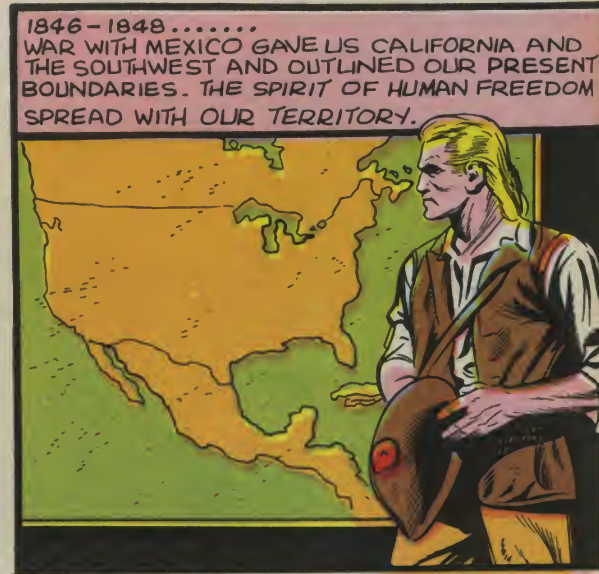


ON LAND AND SEA, THE NEW GENERATION OF MINUTE MEN FOUGHT WITH COURAGE... THEY LOST BATTLES... BUT **WON** THE WAR OF 1812! THIS ESTABLISHED US AS A NATION TO BE RESPECTED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD!



1836..... THE SPIRIT OF THE MINUTE MEN ASSERTED ITSELF AGAIN AT THE ALAMO AGAINST THE FORCES OF THE MEXICAN DICTATOR, SANTA ANNA!

TEXAN-AMERICANS FOUGHT TILL EVERY MAN WAS DEAD



1846-1848..... WAR WITH MEXICO GAVE US CALIFORNIA AND THE SOUTHWEST AND OUTLINED OUR PRESENT BOUNDARIES. THE SPIRIT OF HUMAN FREEDOM SPREAD WITH OUR TERRITORY.

THEN IN 1861, DESPITE LINCOLN'S EFFORTS, CAME THE CIVIL WAR!

THE SPIRIT OF THE MINUTE MAN WILL PRESERVE THE UNION!



THROUGH FOUR TRYING YEARS OF WARFARE, 1861-1865, THE NATION WAS DIVIDED.

THE WAR WILL SOON BE OVER..

YES, AND THE UNION PRESERVED FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY..



BETWEEN 1865 AND 1898, THE MINUTE MAN'S PRESENCE WAS FELT IN THE WINNING OF THE WEST...

OPPRESSION IS MAKING NEW STANDS IN EUROPE. WE MUST MAKE AMERICA'S FREEDOM THE BEACON LIGHT FOR ALL THE WORLD..



THEN IN 1898.....

THE MINUTE MAN'S SPIRIT WIPED OUT UGLY SPANISH OPPRESSION IN CUBA. WE ALSO TOOK THE PHILIPPINES AND MADE THEM OUR LASTING FRIENDS...



1914-1918 - FIRST WORLD WAR - PRESIDENT WILSON TRIED PEACEFUL PERSUASION, BUT TO NO AVAIL. IN 1917, WE WERE FORCED TO ENTER THE STRUGGLE.

EXTRA!
PRESIDENT WILSON ASKS CONGRESS TO DECLARE WAR ON GERMANY!



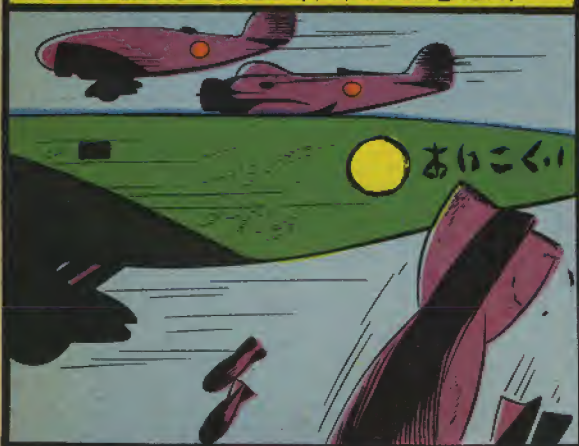
THE MINUTE MAN'S READINESS REVIVED EUROPE'S HOPES OF FREEDOM AS OUR MEN MARCHED GRIMLY INTO BATTLE..



THE GERMANS WERE NO MATCH FOR THE MINUTE MAN! EVEN AS WE DEFEATED THE HESSIANS IN 1776, SO DID WE BEAT THEIR DESCENDANTS IN 1918..



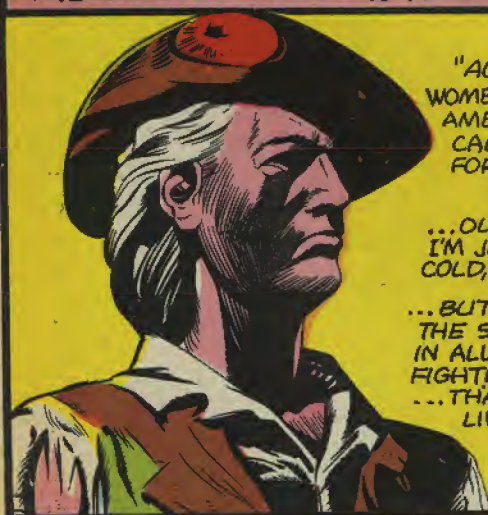
DEC. 7, 1941.....
AGAIN FREEDOM HATERS FORM A WORLD CONSPIRACY! JAPAN BOMBED PEARL HARBOR, WHILE TALKING PEACE IN WASHINGTON!



YOUNG AND OLD RUSHED TO THE SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT!



THE MINUTE MAN OF 1942 SPEAKS : -



"AGAIN, THE MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF AMERICA ARE BEING CALLED TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY!

...OUR ENEMIES THINK I'M JUST A STATUE OF COLD, DEAD METAL!

...BUT YOU KNOW I AM THE SPIRIT OF AMERICA IN ALL OF YOU--WORKING, FIGHTING, SACRIFICING...
...THAT LIBERTY MAY LIVE FOREVER!"

FOR VICTORY

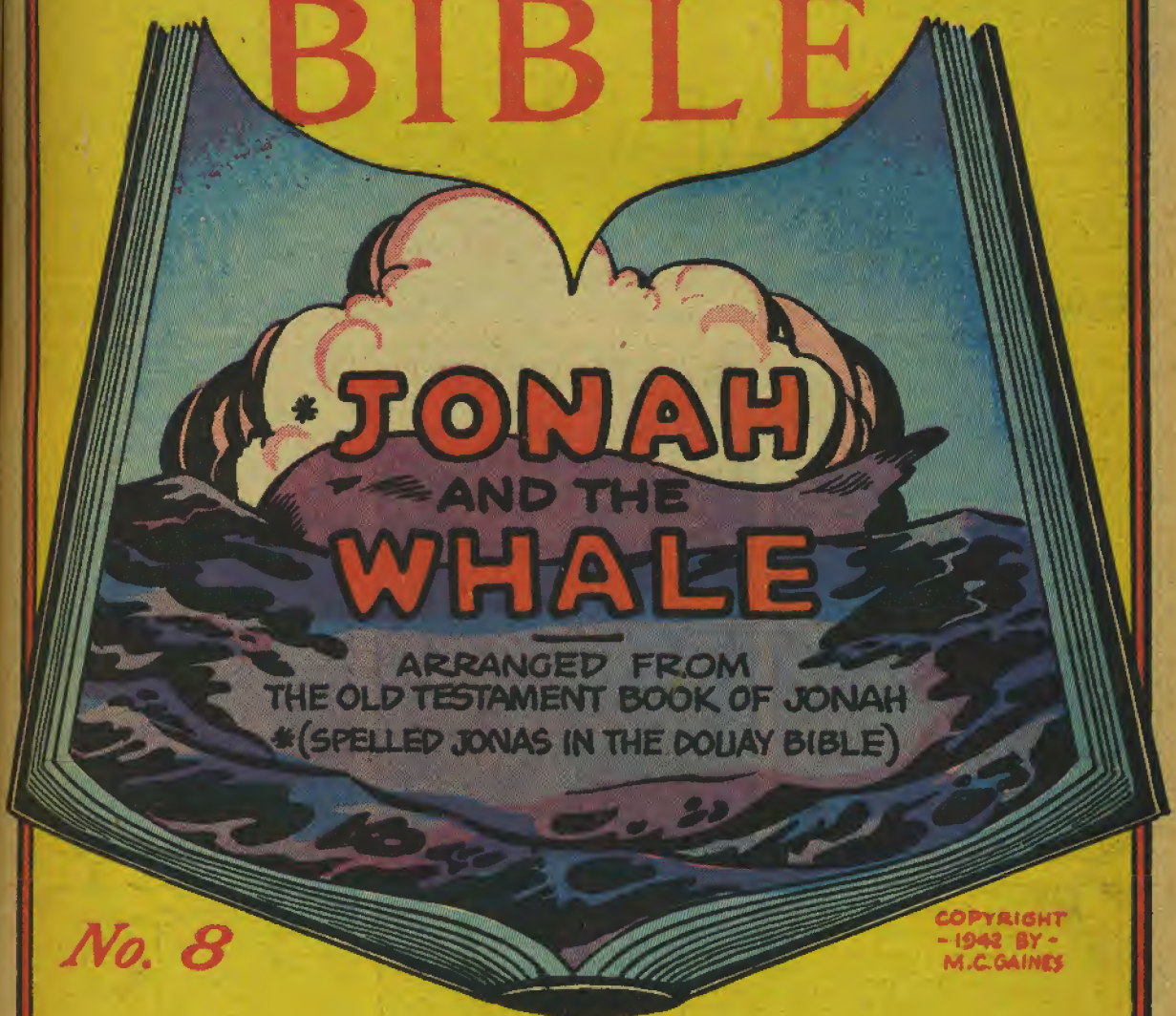


BUY
UNITED
STATES
WAR
BONDS
AND
STAMPS

PICTURE STORIES

from the

BIBLE



* JONAH AND THE WHALE

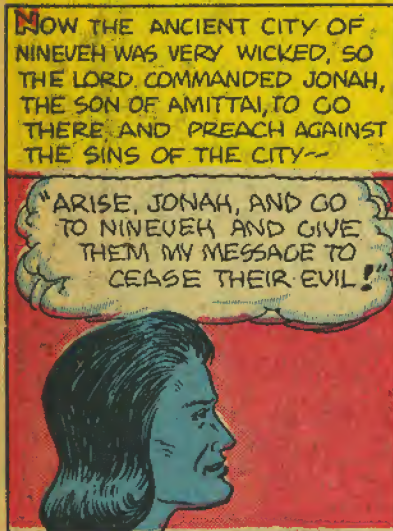
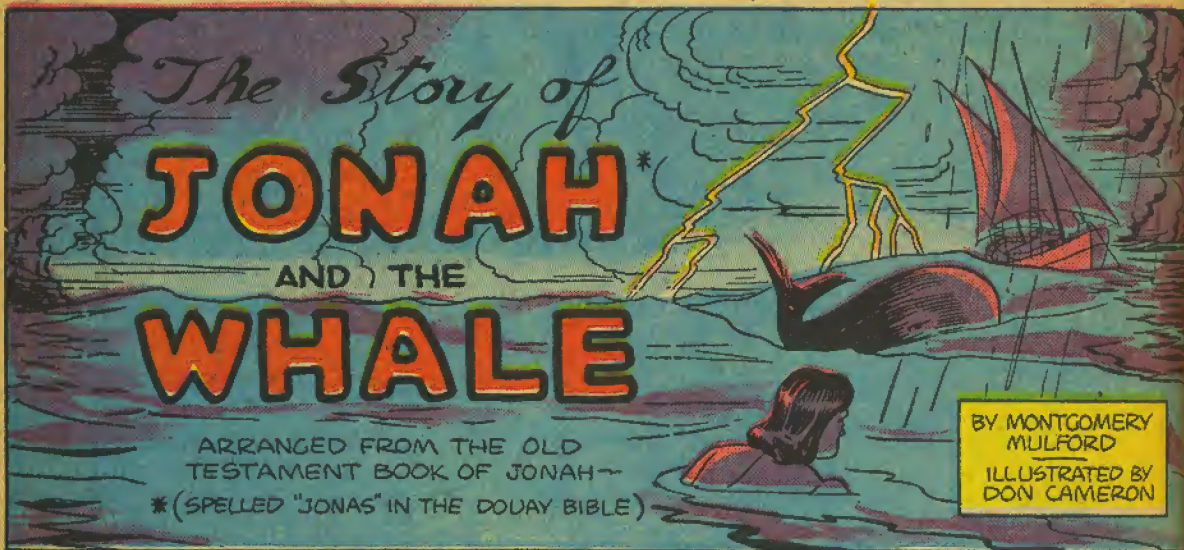
ARRANGED FROM
THE OLD TESTAMENT BOOK OF JONAH
*(SPELLED JONAS IN THE DOUAY BIBLE)

No. 8

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M.C. GAINES

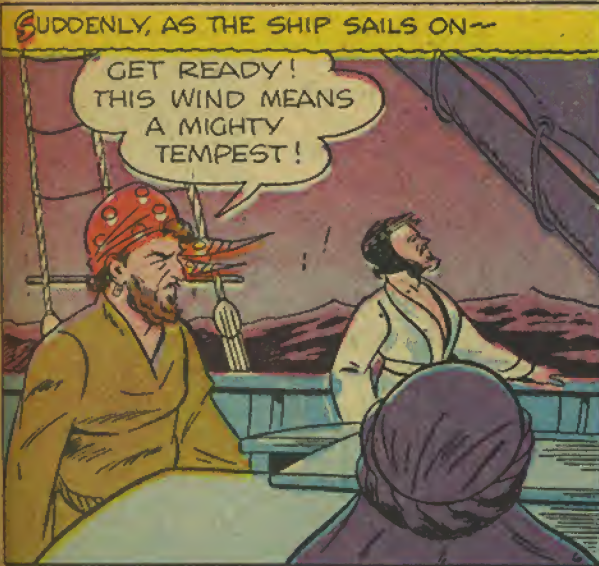
*For the first time in newspaper history, stories
from the Bible are pictured in colored continuity.*

SUNDAY HERALD



SUDDENLY, AS THE SHIP SAILS ON~

GET READY!
THIS WIND MEANS
A MIGHTY
TEMPEST!



EACH SAILOR, AFRAID, CALLED ON
HIS GOD TO SAVE HIM~

OH, BAAL,
PRESERVE
US!

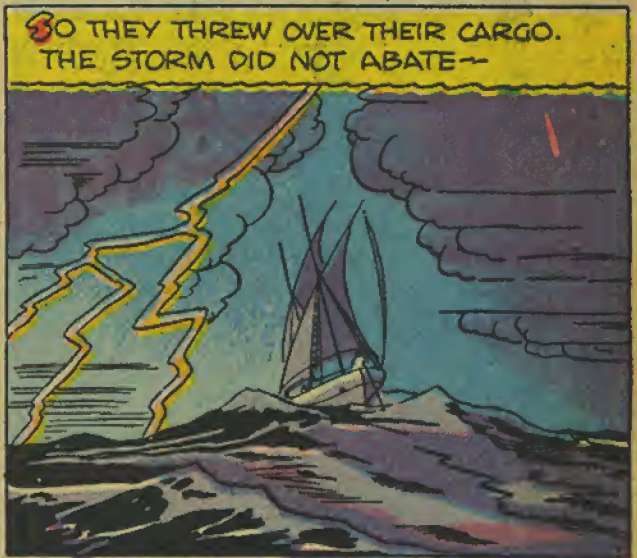
GOD OF
THE STORM,
BE
MERCIFUL!



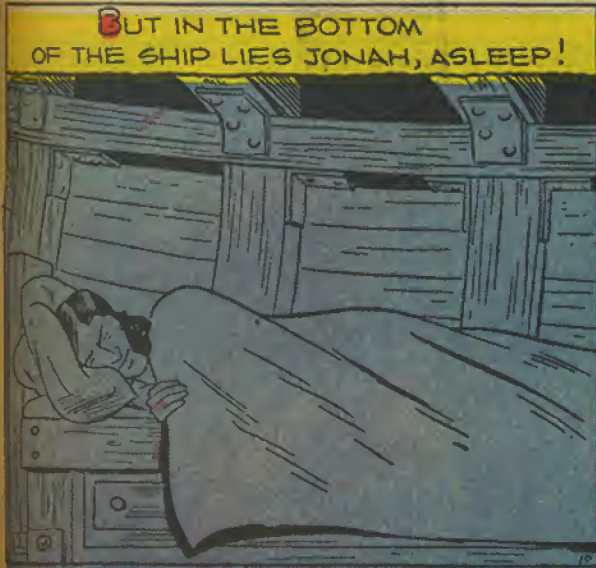
THROW OVER OUR
CARGO AND
EXCESS WEIGHT
SO THAT THE
SHIP WILL
FLOAT!!



SO THEY THREW OVER THEIR CARGO.
THE STORM DID NOT ABATE~

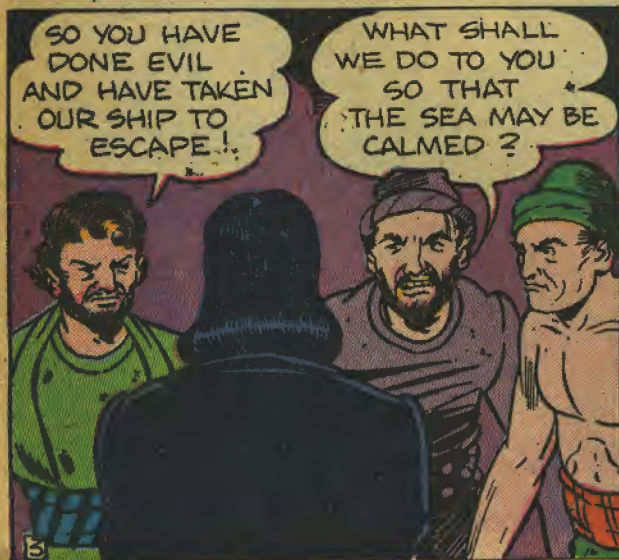


BUT IN THE BOTTOM
OF THE SHIP LIES JONAH, ASLEEP!



WHAT MEANS
THIS? YOU SLEEP
THROUGH A
TEMPEST?





THE SAILORS CALL UPON JONAH'S GOD--



SO JONAH WAS THROWN INTO THE RAGING WATERS----



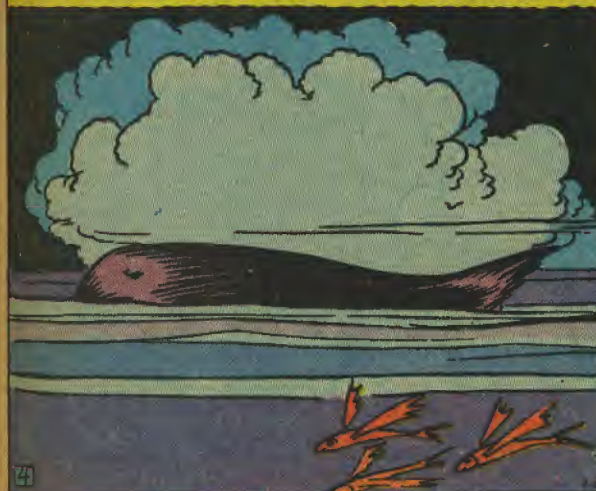
NOW THE LORD SENT A GREAT FISH TO WHERE JONAH WAS--



AND THE GREAT FISH SWALLOWED JONAH ALIVE!

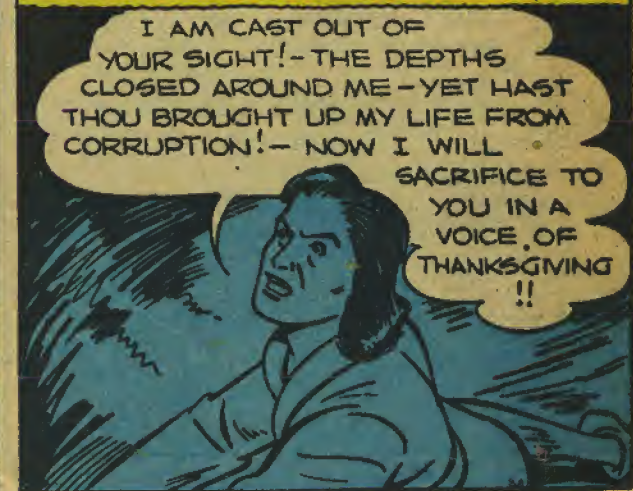


THREE DAYS AND NIGHTS, JONAH WAS IN THE STOMACH OF THE GREAT FISH.



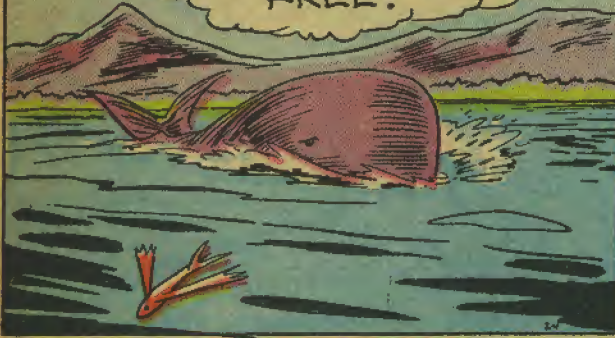
IN THE GREAT FISH'S STOMACH, JONAH REPENTED AND PROMISED TO OBEY GOD.

I AM CAST OUT OF YOUR SIGHT!-- THE DEPTHS CLOSED AROUND ME-- YET HAST THOU BROUGHT UP MY LIFE FROM CORRUPTION!-- NOW I WILL SACRIFICE TO YOU IN A VOICE OF THANKSGIVING !!



SO THE LORD HEARD JONAH'S PRAYER AND CAUSED THE GREAT FISH TO SWIM TOWARD THE LAND--

"JONAH HAS REPENTED, AND WILL BE CAST ASHORE AND MADE FREE!"



THE GREAT FISH CASTS JONAH ASHORE



THEN THE LORD SPOKE TO JONAH--

"ARISE, GO AT ONCE TO NINEVEH, AND PREACH AS I BID YOU!!"

YES, LORD!



NOW I MUST NOT BE AFRAID, BUT DO AS THE LORD, MY GOD ASKS! - IN THREE DAYS I REACH NINEVEH!



SO JONAH FINALLY OBEYED, AND REACHED NINEVEH, AND PREACHED--

IN FORTY DAYS SHALL NINEVEH BE DESTROYED!



THE PEOPLE LISTENED AND REPENTED--

WE SHALL PRAY THIS DAY, TO BE SAVED FROM GOD'S WRATH!

GOD MAY YET SPARE US IF WE REPENT!



THE KING HIMSELF LAID ASIDE HIS ROYAL ROBE AND ASKED THE PEOPLE TO PRAY AND FAST --

IF MY PEOPLE TURN FROM THEIR EVIL WAYS, GOD MAY SPARE US!



JONAH SPEAKS AGAIN IN ANGER ----

NINEVEH SHALL FALL BECAUSE YOU HAVE BEEN WICKED!

BUT EVEN THE KING HAS LAID ASIDE HIS ROYAL ROBES FOR SACKCLOTH!



BUT GOD REPENTED, AS THE PEOPLE OF NINEVEH SAW THEIR EVIL WAYS AND CHANGED--GOD SPOKE TO JONAH AT EVENING ----

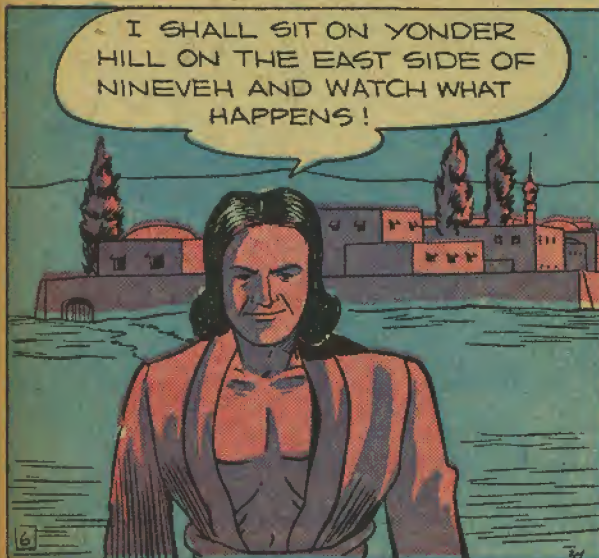
"BE NOT ANGRY, JONAH!--I SHALL SAVE NINEVEH WHICH HAS REPENTED OF WRONG DOING!!"



BUT JONAH WAS ANGRY THAT THE LORD CHOSE TO SPARE NINEVEH, AFTER HE PREDICTED ITS DESTRUCTION----



I SHALL SIT ON YONDER HILL ON THE EAST SIDE OF NINEVEH AND WATCH WHAT HAPPENS!



DURING THE NIGHT, GOD MADE A VINE GROW TO SHELTER JONAH THE NEXT DAY FROM THE BURNING SUN AND EAST WIND --



-BUT LATER CAUSED THE VINE TO WITHER.

I AM FAINT FROM THE HEAT,
NOT HAVING THE COOL LEAVES
OF THE VINE TO PROTECT
ME. I WISH I WERE DEAD!



THE LORD SPEAKS TO JONAH--

"IF I WAS SORRY FOR YOU
AND MADE THE VINES TO
GROW TO RELIEVE YOUR SUFFERING
FROM THE HEAT, SHOULD I NOT
MUCH MORE HAVE PITY UPON
NINEVEH WITH ONE HUNDRED
AND TWENTY THOUSAND PEOPLE?
SHOULD I THEN PUNISH THEM
WHEN THEY HAVE REPENTED?"



I HAVE BEEN SELFISH
AND WRONG BUT
NINEVEH HAS REPENTED
AND WILL BE
SAVED!



JONAH BIDS FAREWELL TO NINEVEH,
PREPARING TO GO HOME ---

GOD HAS SEEN
FIT TO SPARE YOU,
SO DO THE RIGHT
THING ALWAYS AND
NINEVEH SHALL
STAND!

NOW WE
SHALL LIVE
HAPPILY!!



THEN, JONAH WENT HOMEWARD, CONTENTED! HIS WORK DONE AT LAST! ---

NOW ALL IS
ACCOMPLISHED,
AND I NO LONGER
HAVE TO BE AFRAID!



END

NEXT WEEK - THE STORY OF ESTHER

NARRATIVE ILLUSTRATION

The daily strip did not appear until after the turn of the century when Winsor McCay, who had been doing "Little Nemo" and "Dreams of a Rarebit Fiend," did the latter as a daily strip to go across the top of the page. McCay used the dream as an excuse for fantasy. He was a prolific and expert artist who achieved a feeling of great proportions in his work. Under the pseudonym of Silas, he turned out "A Pilgrim's Progress," "Hungry Henrietta," and several other strips.

During the first ten years of the century, Sunday comic supplements appeared all over the country. Outcault evolved "Buster Brown," whose tricks invariably got him into trouble. The last panel usually showed "Buster Brown" with a pillow tied behind him, writing an impertinent moral. This was the first character to inspire clothes-trends. Buster Brown collars, shoes, and hats were to be found in most every child's wardrobe.

Carl Schultz, big and blustering, brought "Foxy Grandpa" to New York, and in the years it ran, the two young imps were never able to outwit the cagey old man. Here again were Wilhelm Busch's Max und Moritz, now thwarted at each turn by someone who could beat them at their own game.

E. D. Kemble was another early artist in the field of the comic strip. He had published, as had most of these pioneers, in *Puck*. He originated "Black Berries," colored comic characters, for the *World*, in 1897.

The "Monkeyshines of Marseleen" by Norman E. Jennett, "The Kid" by F. M. Follett, "Uncle Mun" by Fred Nankivel, are among the early strips, no longer seen, which are in the exhibition. Other creations by Oppen are also included: "Alphonse & Gaston," "Maude the Mule," "Mr. Dubb and Mr. Dough," and "Our Antedeluvian Ancestors."

The strip entered its golden period around 1910 and continued until 1930, as distinctly "comic" in content as well as form. At the opening of the exhibition, however, Gilbert Seldes said that the real golden age of comic strips would always be the time when each person first discovered them for himself — when they became a part of his life.

"Bringing Up Father," by George McManus, started 31 years ago. It now appears in 71 countries and 27 languages and has been adapted to stage, motion pictures, and radio. Even a tapestry was woven about Jiggs and Maggie in Persia. Undoubtedly, it is the universality of the henpecked husband that accounts for the international appeal of these characters.

George Herriman first started with such strips as "The Dingbats" and "The Family Upstairs." His style was unique, his humor eloquent. Both have inspired



A trio of Fontaine Fox's Toonerville characters

other artists. He started to run a sub-strip under "The Family Upstairs." It was a story about a cat that was in love with a mouse. This strip finally matured into "Krazy Kat." Herriman was noted for the fine detail and non-sequitur backgrounds in his strip. "Krazy Kat," long a favorite of intellectuals, has inspired a symphony.

The exhibition brings together many other strips of historical significance. The first girl strip, still running, was originated by Cliff Sterrett, a distinct stylist and master of pantomime. This strip is "Polly and Her Pals."

Before Sidney Smith drew "The Gumps," he had a strip called "Buck Nix," which is on exhibition.

One of the greatest newspaper cartoonists was T. A. (Tad) Dorgan. He affected the work of many to follow and originated such expressions as "Thanks for the Buggy Ride," "Hot Dog," and "Yes, We Have No Bananas."

Bud Fisher, the creator of "Mutt and Jeff," first worked on the *San Francisco Examiner* for \$15 a week. He first drew Mutt and later added Jeff to the strip. Recently these two characters celebrated their thirty-fifth anniversary.

The picture of the period would not be complete without Wallace Morgan's "Fluffy Ruffles." When first assigned to this task, Mr. Morgan had to cull the Paris fashion magazines for styles in which to clothe his beautiful character. Fluffy Ruffles shoes and suits were the rage before World War I.

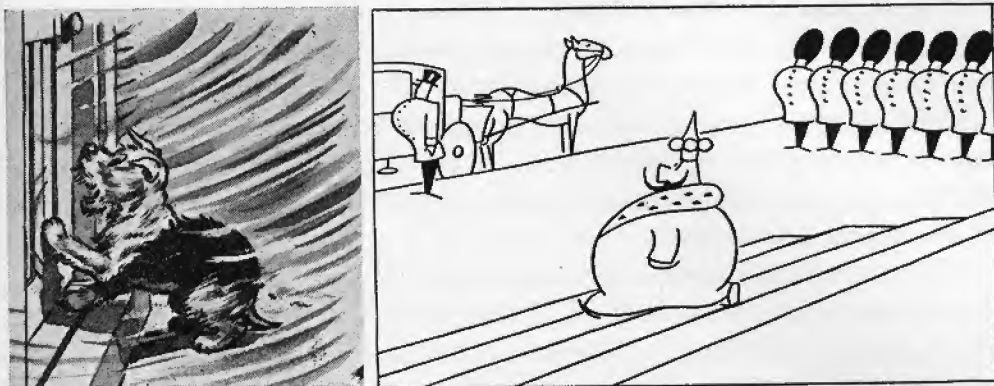
Tom Powers, the great stylist, worked primarily in the political cartoon medium, but will never be forgotten for his famous "Joy and Gloom" series. Another famous stylist, who not only has influenced artists by example, but has been a friend and adviser to young cartoonists for years, is Fred Cooper, a member of the advisory board for the exhibition and designer of its invitation.

In the late twenties, one of the most quoted artists was Milt Gross. His "He Done Her Wrong" is a wordless novel in cartoons, and is rated among American masterpieces of humor.

Not many artists have been able to achieve the fine dog drawings of Edwina, one of the few women to gain success in the field of the comic strip. During

A sample of Milton Caniff's strip (© News Syndicate Co.), voted the favorite at the A.I.G.A. Comics show in New





Edwina's Sinbad of 1916 and Otto Soglow's Little King (© King Features Syndicate)

the twenties, Harry Hershfield's "Abe Kabibble" was most popular. Hershfield was a master of melodrama and rapid action.

Clare Briggs was the first outstanding artist of the human-interest school, with his "When A Feller Needs A Friend," "Life's Little Tragedies," and "Mr. & Mrs." He was closely followed by H. T. Webster, whose "The Timid Soul" is a present favorite.

Rube Goldberg, famous for his "Crazy Inventions," was a mining engineer and applies many scientific laws to his side-splitting fantasies.

In 1920, Billy de Beck originated "Barney Google" and this superb character, done with the masterful touch of a Dickens, has remained among the ten most popular strips for twenty years. As well as being a notable stylist, de Beck gave the English language such phrases as "Banana Oil," "Horsefeathers," "Sweet Mamma," "Hotsy Totsy," "Heebie Jeebies," and "Tetched in the Haid."

The exhibition includes samples of all popular strips today. To name a few: "Fritzi Ritz," Ernie Bushmiller; "Li'l Abner," Al Capp; "Smitty," Walter Berndt; "Dick Tracy," Chester Gould; "Betty," C. A. Voight; "Winnie Winkle," Martin Branner; "Joe Palooka," Ham Fisher; "Gasoline Alley," Frank King; "Skippy," Percy Crosby; "Prince Valiant," Harold E. Foster, considered one of the greatest artists; "Thimble Theatre, starring Popeye," Elzie Crisler Segar; "Buck Rogers," Dick Calkins; "Moon Mullins," Frank Willard; "Wash Tubbs," Roy Crane; "Tillie the Toiler," Russ Westover; "Blondie," a real ambassador in South America, Chic Young; "Henry," Carl Anderson, who, when he was over seventy, originated this strip; and "The Little King," Otto Soglow.

In particular, one should mention Milton Caniff, whose strip, "Terry and the Pirates," is rapidly becoming one of America's top favorites. Caniff is the idol of the young developing cartoonists today. He practically uses a motion-picture technique, getting odd angle shots and developing his story so that he can use his characters in pantomime, without balloons. His strip was voted the favorite by visitors who came to the comic strip exhibition while it was on view at the National Arts Club.

It was in the early thirties that many of the strips turned from the comic to the adventure motif. Illustrative of this trend are "Little Orphan Annie," "Dick Tracy," and Caniff's "Terry and the Pirates." If James Swinnerton is right in saying that the subject appeal of the comics has had three major phases in forty years, the grotesqueries and the farces of family life being two, the adventure story is obviously the third.

In 1933, the first comic book, in its present form, made its appearance. It was called *Funnies on Parade* and contained reprints of Sunday comic pages. This book and the next to develop — *Famous Funnies* — and then a complete book about Skippy (both of which also contained reprints of Sunday pages) were sold to large companies as advertising premiums.

Famous Funnies was used also as the title of the first book to be put on sale to the general public, marketed, at first, through chain stores and later on news-stands. Its success very soon inspired a number of new magazines, employing the same general format and using reprints of Sunday comic pages.

In 1935, the first original art work appeared in a magazine called *Fun*. The use of original material for comic books did not achieve its majority until after the advent of "Superman" in 1938.

"Superman," the creation of Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, was turned down by practically every comic syndicate until the writer brought it to the attention of the publishers of *Action Comics*. It was an immediate success and the superhero was launched. Such characters as "Batman," "Flash," "Green Lantern," "Doc Savage," "Captain America," "Captain Marvel," and "Wonder Woman" were inspired by Superman. The comic magazine had become a picture book of adventure stories. Today there are approximately 100 comic books put out by about 20 publishers. They have a monthly sale of about fifteen million copies and reach an estimated audience of between fifty and sixty million.

Within the last several months an experiment has been made in the use of stories from the Bible, using the comic book colored continuity technique. A series of ten ran in a New England paper, and responses indicated such wide

acceptance that a 10-cent, 64-page book, *Picture Stories from the Bible*, has lately gone on sale. One of these stories is inserted with this article. Another insert shows a similar use to help sell War Bonds and Stamps to young Americans.

Some parents have viewed with alarm the high circulation figures of the comic books, and educators and psychiatrists have set themselves to a serious study of this new influence on children. Is it harmful? Does it stunt the reading ability of children, or kill their appreciation for traditional literature? Does it give them bad dreams?

The answers to some of the questions are summed up in an article in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* by Drs. Laurretta Bender and Reginald S. Lourie who say, "Normal, well-adjusted children with active minds, given insufficient outlets or in whom natural drives for adventure are curbed, will demand satisfaction in the form of some excitement. Their desire for blood and thunder is a desire to solve the problems of the threats of blood and thunder against themselves or those they love, as well as the problem of their own impulses to retaliate and punish in like form. The comics may be said to offer the same type of mental catharsis to its readers that Aristotle claimed was an attribute of the drama. This effect of the comic book in normal children is comparable to the therapeutic effect in the emotionally disturbed child. Well-balanced children are not upset by even the more horrible scenes in the comics as long as the reason for the threat of torture is clear and the issues are well stated."

James Swinnerton, from another point of view, aptly describes the role of the comic strip artist in society: "As I look at the work of lots of my boys (I've brought quite a few into the game) and the other fellows' boys, I am glad, and yes, proud, to have been able to start some in the game that, in a clearly humorous way, brings a smile to a too serious mouth, and helps many to forget the blue hour.

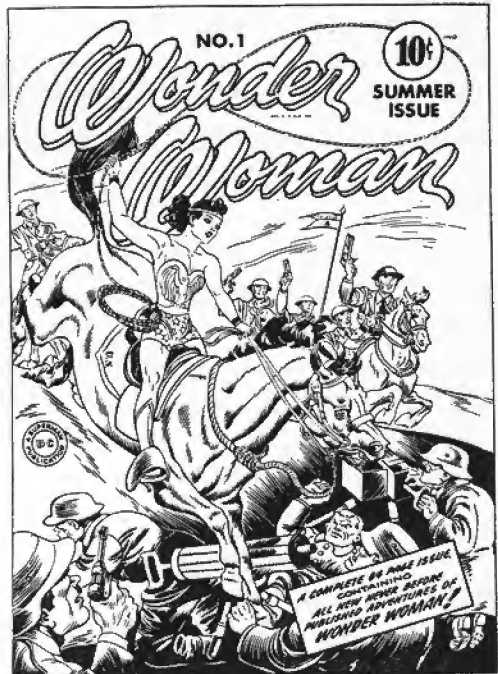
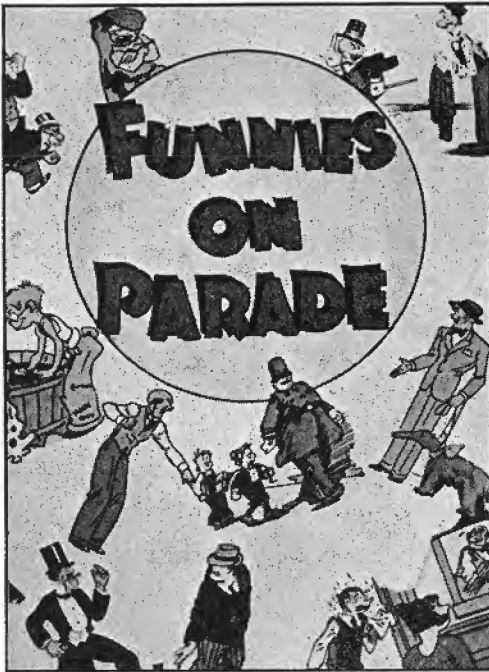
"This fact was forcibly brought to my notice on a subway trip after the close of a New York working-day. I saw the tired passengers, still with their business cares and worries weighing them down, seat themselves (maybe) and unfold their evening papers, just scanning the big headlines, then going generally to the sports pages, and then to the page of comics.

"Each one selected his favorite, and if it suited him, he smiled or showed a deep interest. In either event he had forgotten his troubles, and a new mood was on him. Who could say he was not delivered to his home in better humor and a more companionable mood by the magic of the lowly comic strip?

"That influence in millions of homes must be a powerful force for mass happiness."

Swinnerton sees the social aspect of the comic strip; educators study its psychological implications. The comic strip and the comic book lend themselves peculiarly to such examination. But what of their influence on the graphic arts? And what of the influence of the graphic arts on them?

Certainly as an exercise in mass production, the experience of their publishers has been instructive. These books are printed in enormous editions for which production must be gauged in terms of millions. Their appeal to the consumer is also of profound significance and their method of approach has been recognized and adapted to purposes of propaganda and advertising. Many of their artists have ingenuity, imagination, and an unerring control of the pen in communicating ideas. Perhaps the next chapter in their history will record how beauty, in layout and design, was heightened without estranging the people who loved them as they were.



The earliest of the comic magazines in their present format — and a newcomer.

Funnies on Parade, produced as a premium to help the sale of merchandise, contained reprints of Sunday pages. The new book is devoted entirely to hitherto unpublished episodes in the career of a daring, death-defying heroine named Wonder Woman.